(b) to (d) Government has laid down Route Dispersal Guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country. It is, however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of Route Dispersal Guidelines issued by the Government.

Development of Jabalpur Airport

1404. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the land was procured free of cost from the Government of Madhya Pradesh for development and expansion of the airport at Jabalpur;

(b) if so, the details of development activities like terminal building, night landing facility, etc.; and

(c) if not, by when the same would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI):(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The runway has been extended from 4500 feet to 6500 feet at a cost of Rs.11.76 crores for operation of B/737 type of aircraft in fair weather conditions and work for new terminal building for 200 passengers and car park is nearing completion at an estimated cost of Rs.7.5 crores. At present, there is no Night Landing Facility at Jabalpur Airport and it would be planned further if required from traffic point of view or operational reasons.

Competition in AIR Fares

1405. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Gulf Airlines and Emirates Airlines have joined hands to compete with the Indian Airlines in regard to air fares; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and what steps have been taken to protect the national carrier in the air fare game?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI):(a) and (b) The international fares are regulated by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) where all the airlines participate and pass unanimous resolution. The resolution is adopted by all countries.

Fleet requirements of AI and IA

1406. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) what are the additional fleet reguirements of the Indian Airlines and Air India; and

(b) by when the induction of additional fleet is likely to be completed and at what cost?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI):(a) and (b) The Board of Directors of Indian airlines in its meeting held on 27.03.2002 approved the proposal for acquisition of 43 aircraft comprising A-319, A-320 and A-321 from Airbus Industries during the period 2003-04 to 2007-08 at a net cost of Rs.10,089 crores. The Project Report submitted by Indian airlines is under Government's consideration.

The Board of Directors of Air India in its meeting held on 8.11.2003 approved the proposal for acquisition of 10 medium capacity long-range (A340-300) and 18 small capacity short-range (B-737-800) aircraft at an estimated cost of Rs.10,589 crores. The Project Report relating to this proposal has not yet been received by the government.

No firm target date for completion of the acquisition process can be indicated at this stage, since the prescribed procedures for consideration of public investment proposals will have to be followed.

Purchase of Aircrafts by AI

1407. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state: